A

TVVO-FOLD TREATISE,

THE ONE

DECYPHERING THE worth of SPECVLATION, and of a retired life.

THE OTHER

CONTAINING A discoverie of YOVTH and OLD AGE.

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THE WORTH OF SPECULATION, and of a retired *life briefly decyphered.*

SO loftie and generous is the minde of man, so impatient of all fixed residing in any one place, that shee will neither preiudice her worth by a slauish dependencie, nor bee confined to one mansion, without liberty to remoue both whither, and when shee pleaseth. No, no, that little yet liuely spark which animats the more impotent, and feeble part in vs, is loth to suffer a perpetuall imprisonmene within

our loathsome carkasses: it is content only to vouchsafe vs a reasonable being, so that wee denie not vnto it, its own liberty, and well being; Thus to doe were to recompence benefittes with ingratitude, it were nothing else but an vnlawful prohibition of that, which to the soule is not only lawful, but expediēt, yea, necessary. For what is, or can bee more necessarie to the soule, for that pure, & heavenly substance of ours, then to dispossesse her selfe of a base earthen vessel? What more lawfull to the soule then to resume her owne freedome when shee listeth? What againe, is more expedient for the soule, then to behold her selfe in her owne lustree, and beautified essence, without any commixtion tending to putrefaction, & decay? Lastly, how may a thing every

way so behouefull to the soule, be any way compassed, if not by the helpe and furtherance of diuine speculation? Surely if that soule which doth informe vs, haue any repast at all, while it doth informe, nothing but speculation is the feast-master; if at any time it enioy quiet possession within our restlesse flesh, the kind landlord is speculatiō: without whose speciall indulgence, neither quiet possession, nor any repast, could euer bee procured. As for action (the direct opposit to speculation) that can afford no such matter, it wearieth out the bodies orgas, and with them (as much as in it lyeth) lulleth asleepe the very soule also: at the least it abateth operatiue vigor; or if not that, yet the manifestation of this vigor can no where be found. In this so great, and disconsolate

an exigencie, it is more then high time that speculation should beſtirre her ſelfe, & begin to defend her beſt friende from manifeſt iniuries: leaſt otherwiſe this friend, this ſoule, being overmuch ſurcharged with too heavie and vnſupportable a burden, ſhould begin to faint, & be over ready to leaue the body, for whoſe ſake onely ſhee dayly is incumbred with many annoyances: in the midſt whereof ſhee may frame to her ſelfe, this, or the like dolefull ſpeech. Sillie ſoule, art thou defectiue in no offices of loue towards the body, & will the body performe none at al to thee? Doſt thou trāsfuſe thy vertue through every part, and doth every parte wage warre againſt thee? muſt thou loue and not be beloued? Whither canſt thou nowe betake thy ſelfe? What

wilt

wilt thou doe? Abroad there is no hope of the least comfort, if thy next bosome frends forsake thee. The body, thy next neighbour, is more ready to keepe thee vnder still, then to vindicate thy wrongs; look at home then, seeke thy selfe in thy selfe, for there only maist thou be sure of best repose, & contentment.

Thus after much expostulation, & that not without certaine discontent, at length the soule (without further delay) knoweth what is absolutely best for it selfe, which becaus it lacketh a fitter appellation, may deservedly be called the soules reflection vpon it selfe, and its owne proper worth, from which immediately ishueth that which we call speculation; which is an act of the vnderstanding of so invaluable and matchlesse worth, as that without it, the

soule would presently bee benummed with an incurable lethargie, or at least suffer violence by that house of claye, wherewith shee is environed. But the case is farre otherwise, when the soule hath contemplation for her associate, and assistant; then at length these tottering, and muddie walles can scarse entreate the soule, their old tenant, longer to inhabite, much lesse to repaire them; the and never til then doth it plainly appeare, that the walles are beholding to the tenant, not the tenant to the walles. Such, and so great is the soules freedome of it selfe, if it were not otherwise enthralled; such againe, and so great, would bee the souls slavish bondage, were it not that contemplation did oftentimes become her best champion, one both willing, &

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able to rescue her out of her enimies hands. For it is more then manifest, & cannot be denyed, that a corporeall, and incorporeall substance, the soule & the body, covnited and knit together in one, must needes before long fall at variance; for one sinketh to the center, the other mounteth high towards heave, the one is sluggish, vnapt for any operation, the other actiue, and alwaies in motion, the one as wax, yeeldeth to every impression, the other is of a more noble nature, and therefore labours to keepe its own proportion, and feature inviolable. In this mutual, and desperate fight where both parties apply themselues to nothing but professed contradiction, what can be hoped for, or expected, but a falling out, & a perpetuall divorce betweene these two, which nature

ture hath contracted, and coupled together, yet only so farre, as there shalbe reciprocal loue, and affection on both sides. Otherwise nature, the indulgent mother to this couple, between whom she equally divideth her care, and loue, will never goe about to haue the one much more wronged then the other; shee had rather admit of a separation, appointing the earth to be the bodies trustie guardian after interring, & allotting speculation for handmaid to the soule in this her widdowhood.

At what time to behold the soule in her sweet, and most delightful contemplation, cannot chuse but be sweet, and delightfull even to him that hath vowed a stoicall apathie, & immoueable constancie, notwithstanding all occurrents. Good god! what thing can bee found

of that transparent clearnesse, which can surmount the brightnesse of thy glorie? What thing can be imagined of that singular worth, and eminency, which being compared with thy maiestie, will not appeare worse then nothing? What wisdome is not foolishnesse, what knowledge is not madnesse, what strength is not very weaknesse it selfe in respect of thine? Yet for all this, that little surviving part, that immortall soule of mortall man, is no sooner dislodged, and dispossessed of her earthie tabernacle, but in a moment she is enthronized in a celestiall habitation, where free leaue is graunted to contẽplate strength in steed of weaknesse, knowledge, in steed of madnes, in steed of foolishnes the chiefe and only wisdome; which is of that vnutterable value, that the

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dim eye of no subordinate nature can prie into it, neither any sublunarie creature conceiue, what to thinke of it: only mans soul having takē leaue with the body, & retired it selfe into that place, frō whēce at first it came; approacheth straightway vnto that light, which to human flesh is vnaccessible: from which foūtain of light it borroweth some illustrious beames, by whose helpe it is able both to see the glorious face of the creator, and the borrowed light of it self the creature. After this survay thus happily made, what (may wee thinke) shall ensue? Is there not a good exchaunge made when heaven is given in lew of earth? when bodily action (which weariness, as an inseparable companion, ever attēdeth) is once turned into the souls speculation? No marvell then, if the soule be

vnwilling to abridge her selfe of liberty, whenas shee cannot expect, much lesse receiue, anie kinde vsage from so bad a yoke fellow, as is the body: no marvel againe if the body bewaile the souls departure, without whose helpe it is no better then a dead truncke. Vpon this vnwillingnesse to depart, it oftētimes cōmeth to passe, that the soule, in meere compassion, is content to admit further neighbourhood with the body, yet vpō this one condition, that mutuall kindnesses may passe betweene thē, whereby they may be dayly occasioned to loue, & liue togither. The soul, for her part, being a free spirit, will therefore in no case curbe the body in any one particular, which is fit for the body to aske, or the soule to giue; neither strength to the nerves, nor well qualified warmnesse

neſſe to the blood, nor quickeneſſe to the eie, nor taſte to the palat, harmonicall ſound to the eare, to the noſe diſcerning of ſmels, nor to moſt partes a delicacie in touch is denied. But all theſe are very trifles: the ſoule neither can, nor wilbe ſo nigard ly as here to ſtay: all theſe donatiues are nothing, if they be balanced with wiſdome, diſcretiõ, iudgement, and ſuch like, which the ſoule, forth of her bounty, conferreth vpon the body, or if not that, yet ſhe maketh the body capable of them. If then the ſoule be ſo liberall, what retribution may be expected, or rather of due, & duety challẽged? Although the body bee vnable to outvie the ſoule in requiting benefits, yet it may thinke, & be likewiſe perſwaded too, that gratefulnes doeth appeare in an indevor to recõpence, although

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disability put a bar to gratefulnes it selfe: therefore something must needs be done, although it be as good as nothing. It is not much which the soul demãdeth, because she knoweth too well, that the body is too beggarly to afforde much: it is no good that she hopeth to receiue but shee woulde gladly indent with the body to doe her no harme amidst her deepe speculatiue thoughts, wherin she desireth a sequestration frõ all bodily incumbrances. For this one and only thing doth the soule daily woo the body, which (like a scornefull Mistris) doth repell its lover; and for a thousand gifts vouchsafeth no better then a squint eie & a cold answere. It is very death to the body to heare of contemplatiõ and therefore we may truely affirme that contemplation is the

soules

soules life: for enioining wherof if seasonable opportunity may be ministred by the bodies consent, it wilbe so much the more welcome: if otherwise, the soule will take opportunity perforce, and make her enimy, the bodie, smart for so churlish, vndiscreet and vngrateful dealing. Behold hunger, thirst, cold, an abridgement of all necessaries (much more of all delight) shall now light vpon the body, and never leaue emacerating, and enfeebling of it, til the soule haue got ten conquest, and victory; all to this end, that shee may the better, and more freely contemplate.

Now, how can we imagine that such a worlde of miseries, could ever befall the body, and that by the soules owne speciall appointment, if no commoditie thereby did accrue vnto the soule?

soule? It is more then probable, that the soule is not of that malitious, & irefull nature, to keep a catalogue of those iniuries which the body offers her, and the impetuously to revēge thē, when no advātage can redoūd vnto her selfe. Suppose we rather that this is the exorbitant, and wrongfull proceedings of the body with the soule; for as much as experience lessoneth vs, that the soule is evill entreated by the body, and oftentimes notoriously wronged, when, in the meane while, the body neither hath, nor can expect anie benefite, but rather inevitable harme. The innocent soule, although it be of a stirring metal, yet will it never bee sensible of iniuries, till needs it must: some it sees, & passeth by: it swalloweth most; and those few wherewith it is most offended, are pā-

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pered gluttony, and over nice delicacie, two ſworne enimies to contemplatiō. Againſt theſe ſhee is inforced to proclaime open warre, by which meanes, if there bee not an vtter ſuppreſſion wrought, yet (at the leaſt) there wilbe ſome mitigation of thoſe vicious and ſenſuall humors: ſo that by them the body ſhall neither die of a ſurfit, nor yet the ſoule bee kept faſting from contemplation.

For procurement whereof if the ſoule doe labour with ſo great anxietie, that ſhee continue reſtleſſe till ſhee haue mette with her: nay further, if ſhe ſuppreſſe the body, and all to the end ſhe may the better expreſſe her loue to contemplation, her ſweeteſt dearling: it cannot bee avoided, but that the ſoule is either too much beſotted with a doting loue of contemplation

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(which none but falsly can say) or else that contemplation is a paramoure in comparison of all other, most worthie to bee sued vnto, which all may truely affirme, and maintaine; yet can none knowe her peareleſſe excellencie, but they only that haue her in free, & full poſſeſſion. In theſe men, opprobrious and ſcandalous obliquies can breed no heartbitings, wordes full fraught with venim can excite no choler, vniuſt ſurmiſes can obtaine no harbour; no wāton thought can haue admittance, no laſcivious eye cā play the ſeducer, no griping hand can monopolize, no painted female can entrap, no ſugred language can allure, no turbulent paſſion can take place. Here is no dogged humour predominant here ſwelling pride ſoone taketh a fall, ſelfe loue is here a-

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bandoned, envies squint eie is put out, bablers are here put to a non plus, fooles silenced, & wise men only (yet scarse they) admitted to speake. For contemplation is of that retired nature, that shee neither can, nor will admitte of good thinges, but in there proper allotted good time: as for bad thinges there is no footing for the at all: whereby it so falleth out, that by meanes of contemplation only these 2 things befall vs, which are most of al to be desired, vertues purchase, & vices banishment. In procuring of the first, this one thing is very remarkable, that vertue (being alwaies of modest carriage) will not adventure to importune, or so much as approach to contemplation before shee bee called, thinking this belike, that if contemplation will take the paines

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to play the vsher, shee cannot chuse but follow with facilitie, & honour too. As for vice, that is of a cótrary humor, it rusheth both hastily & vnmannerly vpon contemplation, adventuring first by might to hinder her intended operations, and if herein it fayle of its purpose, then perswasiue arguments take place, which are thus proposed in circumventing, & inveigling tearmes vnto the soule, the seat and receptacle of all contemplation.

Is it so indeed (fooliſh soule) that thou canst neither relliſh the sweetnesse of pleasure, nor yet assay by the best of thine indevours to bring them within thy own possession? Canst thou be so morosly peeviſh, or rather (to speake as the truth is) canst thou after mature deliberation, & setled judgement, bee so wilfully

fully bent for thy owne hurt, as that thou wilt neither cheare vp thy ſelfe, when thou maiſt, nor yet learne of me how it may bee effected? Beleeue me (my vitall ſpirit) I haue no reaſon to adviſe thee for thy harme, or any enſuing peril, only (as thy next, and deareſt friend) I hartely wiſh that thou wouldſt no longer admit of this melãcholicke, of this drooping dying life. Remember (poore foole) remember thy name, and nature; & if thou glorieſt in the name of a ſpirit, thou canſt not for ſhame, & thy own diſcredit looſe the activity, and nimblenes of a ſpirit. Tell mee now, I pray thee now, tell mee, what activity cãſt thou thy ſelf, ſuppoſe to be in thy ſelfe, ſo lõg as thou wilt haue this idle and fruitleſſe contẽplation ſo cloyſtered & immured within thee? What real and ſubſtantial commo-

modity can ever be ſuppoſed to ſpring from ſo ſluggiſh, and ſuperficiall a cauſe? What ſap is in ſo dead a root? Weigh all this, not ſo much for my ſake (although I muſt & do ingeniouſly confeſſe that I were likely to reape ſome little fruit thereby) as for thy own future advãtage and quieted kind of living: in briefe, ſecond my loving adviſe by thy willing conſent, & aſſure thy ſelfe before long the profit ſhalbe thy owne.

Theſe be the webs which the body vſeth artificially to weaue and al to this end, that the ſoule by them may be inwrapped, and brought to inconveniences & her own irrecoverable downefall: theſe are the *Syrens* ſongs, which the body doth continually chaũt in the ſouls hearing, whereto if the leaſt eare ſhould be given, neither the ſoules pu-

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rity, nor contẽplation the soules welwisher coulde remaine in there spotlesse integrity. The soule is not ignoraunt of these assaults, but shee easily perceiveth whẽce they come, whither they tend, what mischiefe they would produce, if they were not cautiously prevẽted. Therefore when she perceiveth what siege is laid against her, first she commandes contemplation to entrench within her command, within the soule, there to keepe centenell, and neither for friend nor fo, frowne nor smile, pleasure, nor pain, to yeeld one inch, or giue the least intimation of any recoiling at all, till by the soule, the chiefe captaine of the battle, shee be otherwise disposed of. When contemplation hath her station appointed vnto her, there she stands immoueable, til by the soules second appoint-

pointment, ſhe be commanded to change her ground, & ſtande in the forefront of the battle, to offer cumbat to fleſhly, and voluptuous inticements; againſt which becauſe ſhe is vnwilling to prevaile by open denoūcing of war: therefore ſhee chooſeth rather to play the ſmooth tongued orator; endevoring to effect that by ſoft, & inſinuating ſpeeches, which no martial, and warlike blowes could ever accompliſh.

Firſt thē ſo ſoone as ſhe hath exchanged her ſowre viſage, for a louely ſmiling countenaunce (for ſhee well knoweth that the body is much delighted with beautiful outſides, and tricks of loue,) ſhee goeth on forwarde with ſetled, & well marchialled paces to confront the body, her ſeeming friend, and deadly foe, to whom making a low, & mo-

deſt courteſie, ſhee addreſſeth herſelfe to her intẽded ſpeach, which thus ſhe frameth. *I muſt*, and do confeſſe (thrice worthy, and great commander of al terreſtriall, and ſublunarie bodies) that I do much admire your abſolute, and ſoveraigne authoritie over all that inhabite within your graces territories. I am not ignorant, what, & how many haue beene your noble conqueſts, how often you haue triumphed, what garlands & trophies you haue ſtill carried thorough every province. Experience (the ſureſt ſchoolemiſtris) dayly teacheth me, that at your princely command nothing can bee impoſed too grievous, although never ſo abſurd, and repugnant to vertue, & honeſtie: to compriſe the whole truth in few words: that which indeede is a very bondage, if you do but

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say the word, shal presently bee vndergone with pleasure & delight. In one countrey it is your maiesties will to enact drunkennesse for a law and for the due observation hereof old grandsire *Bacchus* (a gentlemã of cõfirmed experience) is appointed chiefe iustice, & vnder him his neighbor *Pluto*, and other firemen (and therefore good drinkers) to be his subordinate officers: by whose ioint and careful vigilancie, it is so wel provided, that there is not one who yeelds not himself cõformable to your highnesse pleasure in this iniunction. In another country your graces wisdome hath assigned a place for common stews & brothel houses, over which dame *Venus* and her sonne *Cupid*, by the maior part of your subiects suffrages, are ioined in commission to see due order kept, which

two (I can assure you my leige) are so extraordinarily carefull to see your law executed, that they impose it vpon al between fourteene yeares of age, and fourscore, not one excepted. In a third countrey your highnes wisdome (being directed by Plato his rule) hath given in strict charge that all thinges should become common; and therefore, to take away by privy stealth, or open robberie, to be no offence, or trespasse at al; so long as no man can plead his proprietie, and say, this, or that, is mine. For default in the execution of this decree your clemencie hath appointed no penaltie, because it is alwaies supposed, and taken for graunted, that every one will say with the comicall poet: *Proximus sum egomet mihi*: therefore I must, for my owne sake, provide for my

ſelfe, no matter how it bee. But why ſhould I vſe much lip-labor in a matter ſo perſpicuous? your Maieſtie beſt knowes, and none diſanulles, or abridgeth your royall authoritie: if any ſhould, I think that I (*abſit verbo invidia*) haue moſt eſpeciall reaſon ſo to doe. Howſoever becauſe I was never contradictor of authority, or buſie body in matters of ſtate of forraine countreys: I thought it moſt conſonant to reaſon, and beſt befitting my gravitie to proceed with your highnes in mild tearmes: thereby the better and more eaſily to obtaine this one and only priviledge; that I may without offence bee exempted, not only from the obſervance of the forenamed, but of many other your highnes laws, which doe inhibite, or rather nullifie my liberty, which to mee is as

deare,& pretious,as the liberty of any potẽtate vnder the whol cope of heaven:by this meanes, if I prevaile according to my wishes,I shall alwaies continue the gratefull remembrance of this freedome,freely bestowed: otherwise if I faile in my proiect, and perceiue withall that my suit is either contemned, or neglected:I fear not to tel you, although you were prouder thẽ you be(as I thinke you cannot) that I am as affectionately touched with iniuries, as you are ready to invre mee vnto them: which if I shal ever perceiue(as I feare I shall)then look to haue other language from mee, and somewhat else besides.I am abrupt, becausе I am passionate, yet this I adde for finall conclusiõ,that what you deny to giue me,that wil I darc to take hereafter, before I aske it, much more

more before you giue it.

Thus may wee see cõtemplations worth not only in maine-taining friendship with the body, so long as no occasion is giuen to the contrary; but also in her menacings, & resolute kind of proceeding, when shee is occasioned: alwaies keeping this in minde that whatsoever kindnesse passeth betweene her, and the body, is only for the soules sake, whose servant shee is, & to whom by particular service she is chiefly obliged. So long then as peace is concluded betweene the two archenimies, the soule, and the body, so long will contẽplation be serviceable to thẽ both, yet with this reservation, that her first and most loiall service bee at the soules becke; her service, or rather her courtesie towards the body never without the souls willing assent: for

contemplation was never ſo ſhameleſſe and giddyheaded, as with every fugitiue ſervaunt to turne her backe, and malecontẽtedly to wander frõ better to worſe, frõ a good Miſtreſſe to a bad: it ſorteth better with her good liking, to continue & perpetuat the loue of one towards her, with whom ſhe may not only haue place of quiet aboade, but familiaritie alſo; which amõgſt other nice dames would be as rare as ſnow at midſomer, or faire weather when the ſun is ſituate about the *Pleiades*. The ſoule ſcorneth this ſcornfulneſſe, ſhee knoweth in what ſteed contemplation (her truſty ſervant) ſtands her: therefore her deſire is, that truſtie ſervice may not goe vnrewarded, but take a true pay with it, according to demerit; which is ſo great in contemplatiõ, that the

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ſoule cannot chuſe, without diſcoverie of great ingratitude, but take notice thereof, and make, at the leaſt, ſome compẽſation.

For what is there befalling the ſoule, & working her harm, which contemplation doth not either altogether ſuppreſſe, or mitigate? Sometimes griefe (the ſoules chiefe adverſarie) appeareth in her blacke mourning gowne with a coũtenance as deiected, as the ſurvivers countenance of a young couple whom vntimely death hath ſeparated: howſoever here is the comfort, that if contemplation be in preſence, this griefe can haue no admittãce. Sometimes anger appeareth in vermilion colours, as though ſhee would burne vp all that is oppoſed vnto her, onely contemplation is exempted becauſe of her ſubtil-

tie, which no anger can ceaſe vpon, or ouercome; contemplation can ouercome it. Somtimes feare beginneth to nibble at the ſoul, but by & by its ſwallowed vp of contemplation. Somtimes loue exhibits her beautiful face to open view, thereby thinking to entrap: but contemplation wants an eye to behold it: or (which is more) contemplation keepes the ſoul ſo blindfolded, that neither loue, nor feare, nor anger, nor griefe, nor any ſuch like paſſiō can any way become viſible to the ſoule. They may peradventure ſtand at a diſtāce, and watch opportunity how to giue aſſault; but firſt, they muſt aske contemplation leaue, otherwiſe their indeavors wil be fruſtrate. They may pretend one thing (as ſeeming to bee the ſoules good friends) and mainly intend another (as the ſoules

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worſt enimies) but the truth of all will appeare vpon contemplations examination, who will ſuffer nothing paſſe without ſcanning that may tend to the ſouls diſcredit. In this ſort doth the ſoule recommend her ſelfe, and all her affaires into the cuſtodie and diſpoſe of comtemplation, by whom ſhee is preſerved ſo intire, and ſpotleſſe, that neither the fleſh with faire (yet counterfeit) outſide can allure her, neither with boiſterous threatnings cā amate her, nor laſtly with any ſtrength bring her vnder, or offer any violence wherewith to hurt her. In this concurrence of all theſe incomparable benefits, which contemplation doth heape vpon the ſoule, there is none more excellent, and ſo far ſurmounting all the reſt, as is the ſoules avocation from baſe, and earthly

ly cogitations to the beholding of vertue, wherein is found no mixture of any such lumpish & grosse substance, as we knowe, and all confesse the earth to be.

So long then as by contemplations assistance wee are able to make so good an exchange: so long as good things may be procured insteed of badde; wee need nothing to doubt whereto contemplation serveth, or what we may reap thereby, rather, this should bee our studie howe to bring contemplation within our owne possession: by meanes whereof wee may bee made of bad ons, good, of good better. Which to effect is a work of very great difficultie, and denied in many of the best actions of the best men, in whome wee may see vnruly passions so to dominire, that vertuous proceedings can scarse get any foo

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ting, much leſſe any encourage ment; no conſummating, no perfection at all.

In contemplations dominions we can obſerue no ſuch rebellion, there is no ſuch irregularitie to be found, becauſe that by contemplations vigilāt care all worldly cogitations are baniſhed, and thoſe only haue admittance which make entrance and prepare the ready pathway to all vertues. Vnto this kind of preparatiue, and abſtractiue thoughts, the ancient Philoſophers were well inured, whoſe eſpeciall care was ever to cheriſh, and maintaine all furtherances whatſoever, tending either to good manners, or literature, for both which contemplation hath ever beene a diligent and laborious factour. For effecting of this ſo great a benefit, wee cannot bee ignorant

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what ſolitarie, and deſert places haue by theſe Philoſophers bin dayly choſen, what abandoning there hath beene of concurſe, what refuſing of outward pōp, all to this end, that the ſoule by contemplations help might the the more freely expatiate, and with greater contentment enioy her owne freedome; which then is moſt apparant, whē outward iollitie is moſt ſuppreſſed. Hereby wee ſee it fall out that thoſe, who are in place of eminencie, farre aboue the vulgars baſe conditiō, haue not ſo much ſpare time, as to thinke who themſelues bee, or where they haue their owne reſidence: they imagine (ſillie fooles) that their eſtate is therefore abſolute, therefore admirable, becauſe a companie of the ſubordinate people vouchſafe them homage and obſervance; whenas they

are altogether debarred from that true contentment, which retired contemplation is able to beſtow, and that in copious manner. Whilſt therefore the vaine glorious giddy headed crue affecteth nothing more, yea nothing elſe, but popularitie, the well adviſed contemplator is of a contrary minde, chuſing rather to ſettle himſelfe to a reall ſolace miniſtred by contemplation, then to a frivolous windie gloſſe beſtowed by an earthie, and therefore a fading excellencie.

Againſt theſe glorious outſides and meere apparances of a ſeeming good, the ſtudious cõtemplatour denounceth open warre; not becauſe hee betakes himſelfe vnto ſuch weapons, as commõly martiall men are beſt acquainted with (for contemplation, and weapons could never

ver admit cohabitation) but be. cauſe his received cuſtome is ever to get himſelfe into his ſtudy, or to ſome cõveniẽt place allotted to ſpeculatiue thoughts: where being once ſeated with much contentment, hee begins forthwith to contemplate the worlds wiſe men, and wiſdoms fooles: he begins to prie into all thoſe glittering tombes, which to outward view are very delectable, but loathſome within. Of this ſort are all thoſe to bee accounted, who through an over tickling delight of popular acclamatiõ, which they prepoſterouſly hunt after, diſanull all ordinary, and modeſt proceedings for the compaſſing of deſerved prayſes: into which ſwelling toade ſtooles, whoſoever ſhall look with a iudicious eye, he ſhall eaſily deprehend more filth within, then beauty without

out, and therevpon deſervedly ſuſpect the one, becauſe hee knowes the other. If this prying & iudicious eie be in any, ſurely it is never wanting to this our contemplatour, who treading directly oppoſit to theſe varniſhed creatures, laboureth with more earneſtneſſe to ſee, and deride their folly; which is ſo much the more ridiculous to the truely wiſe, by how much the more it is received and patronized by the contrary factiō of contradicting and ſwelling humoriſts.

As for contemplation, & her followers, we can find no ambitious ſwelling either in it, or them, except peradventure wee falſly account every thing for pride, which is not ſquiredforth by the ordinarie rule of moſt mens liues; then contemplatiō alſo muſt, without all queſtion,

be

be irregular, because it crosseth the most received, yet vnwarrantable kind of living: if otherwise, we shall both presently, & plainely perceiue what exquisit humilitie there is to bee found, where contẽplation hath chiefe rule and soveraigne command. Not to trouble our selues in a thing manifest to open sight, let vs consider onely the ordinarie behaviour of that partie who is truely devoted to contemplation, and wee cannot choose but wonder at what wee see, being desirous to see more in this kind whereat we may still wonder.

First of all there will be offered to our sight a kind of neglected care for the compassing of worldlie matters; there must therefore be a care for them, because no man can bee vtterly abridged in them: yet must this care bee conioined with neglect,

lect, least peradventure worldly things should insnare vs: vpon this equall ballancing of earthly commodities, there are insequent many noble, and notable effects: whereof the contemplator is the happy possessor; for nowe all things are desired and sought after more for necessities sake, then for vaine, & vnnecessary delights, which most commonly dim, or altogether put out the very eye of reason, and so enthrall our bodily part, that it denies al services due vnto the soule. Now wee see that truely verified which we heare in ordinarie talke: *natura paucis contenta*: because that contemplation takes vppe the first roome, and thrusteth forth all idle passengers, who desire entrance: to discover, afterward to feed vpon the pretended infirmities of contemplation.

Scire

Scire volunt secreta domus atq; inde timeri

The chiefe, ond only care of all carnall voluptuousnes, is nowe and then to enter contemplations privie chamber, and inmost closet; where if any thing bee sluttish, or never so little out of order, then contemplation is sure to heare of it with much bitternesse and reproach, that by this meanes when contemplation is conscious vnto her selfe of her own imperfections, she may the more easily be kept vnder and her professed enimie be the more feared. Contempla tion is more circumspect, then to admit of such a craftie wile without finding out: she stands vpon her watch, and seeth all plots, and stratagems, which sometimes shee forbeares the longer, that her commendation may become the greater, after

she

ſhe hath made them all fruſtrat. For it ſtands not with contemplations policie, to proclaime warre vpō every attempt made againſt her, or contempt offred vnto her; but then it is moſt behouefull and expedient to ſhew her tryed valour, and skil, when ſhee ſeeth the blowe comming, then and never til then to ward the ſame. In this warding it is worth the ſight, to behold how cloſely and warily contemplation carrieth her ſelfe, not offering her antagoniſt ſo much as a leg, or an arme, or the leaſt advãtage to play vpō, becauſe ſhe is ſure to haue the glory of the day without any ſuch condition. It ſorteth better with her liking, and ſtands more with her credit, to vſe all extremity whē ſhee is vrged and challenged; leaſt otherwiſe the adverſe party vpon a cōceipt of ſome yeelding

ding should begin to scorn valour it selfe, and bee the better animated to incounter. Least then the flesh (which is of a dastardly metall) should begin to play vpon advantages, and thereby purchase vndeserved prayses: such caution is warily vsed that it may first want opportunitie to haue what it wisheth, and consequently bee crossed in its chiefe desires; for such and so great be the vnsatiable desires of the flesh, that if it get any, the least advantage, it is alwaies restlesse till it make further proceedings, and adventure to ingrosse all within its owne liberties, and commands. Therefore cometh it to passe that contemplation is so loth to yeeld one iot to so vnsatiable, and wretched a malecontent, as is the flesh: the better and surer course is to denie

what

what ſoever it asketh, that ſo it may leaue of all future petition, or incroaching.

Whoſoever hath nowe but halfe an eye to ſee, or any ingenuitie to confeſſe a meaſured, and infallible truth, hee cannot deny contemplations worth to bee very great, farre ſurpaſſing that ordinarie accompt which moſt men make of it, becauſe very few, or none knowe what it meanes, what is the true nature, what may bee the diſtinguiſhing proprieties thereof. Such as theſe, are to ſue forth their pardon for their default of wilfull ignorance, & they muſt be cõtent to let others reap the fruits of cõtẽplatiõ, wo haue vndergon her diſcipline, kept her cõpany in all extremity of bad fortune, & now expect to receiue, and enioy their well deſerved recompence.

FINIS.

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THE DISCOVERIE OF YOVTH AND OLD AGE.

IF that vulgar, and moſt receiued opinion cõcerning old age, were agreeable to truth, & therein could challenge her foundation; it were meare fooliſhnes to ſpeake in her defence, to cõmend her, were extreame madnes. For avoiding of both theſe iniurious imputations, let vs beſtow the beſt of our indeavours in the diligent inquiſition of her worth; and then wee ſhall not only bee able to maintaine her valified, & decayed eſtima-

tion, but also giue her professed enimies the lie, and provoke them to open cumbat: in which if old age doe not shewe more then a youthfull valour, in the maintaining of her owne priviledges; then let her ever (to her eternall shame and ignominie) be suppressed: if otherwise, then let the greeneheaded youngster learn to knowe his betters, and (so long as they be in presence) let him not once dare to deny his observance, much lesse let him proceed to scornefull calumniation. For what is there in old age which may deservedly be contemned? What enormities doe appeare in it, which youth doth not redouble? Nay rather, what vertues bee not therein manifested which in youth are either concealed or else altogether put to flight? It were an endlesse labour to specifie

cifie all the blots, wherewith youth hath deformed her owne beautifull countenance; yet because shee hath too abiect, and base a conceit of that age, vnto which shee her selfe maketh so great hast; let her first make an inventory of what shee findeth within her owne bosom; afterwards let her proceed to scorne others, as occasion shal be ministred.

To beginne then with that which may bring the rest of her behaviour into suspicion, and make it liable to iust censure: what an vndiscreet carriage is alwaies attending her, and that in the managing of whatsoever affaires doe most concerne her welfare? All is alike to her; substance and accidences, trifles and busines, wisdome and foolishnesse, good and euil appeare in the same colours to

one that cā iudge of no colors. And such a one is youth, who casting her eie vpon some anticke worke, vpon some gallie pot, or other, she is ready forthwith audaciously to swear, that whatsoever hath beene forged in the painters braine, is the representation of something that hath a reall being; and that the gallie pot is better then the Apothecaries oyntment therein contained. So great a mistake as this, deserveth rather to be pitied, then sharply to be reprehēded; because it proceedeth rather from want of setled iudgement, then from any selfe will: although it cannot be denyed, but that such childish mistakes as these be, may prepare too ready a high way, and become harbingers to wilfulnesse, and selfe conceit, two especiall deformities of this age.

For

For no ſooner doe faire obiects exhibite themſelues to a youthfull eye, but forthwith there is a preſent readines to behold what is exhibited: after beholding followeth a tickling delight: after both, an imbracing of whatſoever there is made preſent mẽt: againſt which if any exception by any be takẽ, and therevpon friendly adviſe given, it prevaileth no more thẽ ſpeech to a dead man, or admonition to one that is drunke. Youth is drunke with pleaſure, and therefore dead to all goodneſſe; only then ſome ſparkes of life appeare in her, and then ſhe begins to beſtir her ſelfe, when pleaſure is propoſed for her reward: at this ſhe aimeth, for this ſhe laboureth. As for all thoſe things which are taught in vertues ſchoole, they are therefore irkſome, becauſe they are con-

ioined with too much gravity, and look more censoriously vpon youth, then she can well endure, otherwise they should find better entertainment then commonly they doe, and obtaine that admittance, which now they cannot so much as hope after. The heat of bloud is loath to admit of any qualification, or reducing to a mediocritie, so long as yeares graunt a dispensation for the contrary, and the lawes of the commonwealth will become indulgent.

All this while vnbridled youth wil runne it selfe forth of breath, in running ryot, accoũting that the greatest grace, to liue vngratiously; and that life to be manlike, which is altogether beastly: thus inverting the course of all things, that thereby it may seem to be somthing: but what this may bee, it owne selfe

selfe cannot determine. It still dreameth, (never iudiciously thinketh) of empires, kingdoms dominions; it affecteth preheminencie, and superintendency: it laboureth for caps and curtesies: it glorieth in pride, swelleth with envy, boasteth of its strength, sacrificeth to its owne faire face, it is carried along with selfe loue, and so becomes worse then a very foole.

Notwithstanding all this, there neither is, nor can be any thing out of order in youth, because selfe loue will at all times take her part, and pleade not guilty; although pride, vnconstancie, vaine glory, ambition, envy, disdain, wantonnes, riot, prodigality, anger, impatience, and bloody revenge bee impannelled vpon a iurie, and passe their verdict against her. For so it comes to passe in these

assyses, that selfe-loue (being alwaies more bolde then wise) will adventure rather to vsurp the iudges owne place, then be cast by any law: the rather because she knoweth that if youth (her spendthrift master, & beggerly clyent) meet with an ouerthrowe, it wil bee impossible to recover any damages: selfe-loue could scarse get her fee: therefore partly for her owne sake, in the pursuit of this present businesse; and partly for future aduantage hereafter when youth shall haue moe law matters tryed, (for youth is alwaies litigious, & troublesome) therfore doth selfe-loue pleade for youth, in hope to bee entertained for her lawier in all future suits. Thus howsoeuer youth by turbulent proceedings may indeavour to cleare her selfe from many great, & scandalous bils

of

ofinditemēt, put in againſt her: yet the Chauncery and court of conſcience, neither can, or will, acquit her, ſo long as the predominant faults which are ſeated in her, bee content to make vp the iury, and to find out that for truth, which youth can never for ſhame deny, much leſſe contradict.

To begin and proceed in order: who ever ſaw youth and pride dwell aſunder? Whē doth not pride ſeeke for youth to be her manſion houſe, and againe when was youth without pride for her tenant? Not tenant at will, becauſe youth will never put her forth of the dores, or, at any time, diſpoſſeſſe her, except then only, when pride would ſhew her ſelfe to be a good huſwife (as ſeldome or neuer ſhee doth) and bee content to weare worſe cloathes, then the reſt of

her neighbours, which never, or against her will, shee is accustomed to doe. Vpon these conditions, and others of the same nature, as to take the wall before it bee given, to sitte in the chaire whē the rest sit on stools, to speake the first, and the last word of every tale, to goe with two men, when shee can scarse maintaine one in good fashion, to eat of the best, whē the worst is too good for her, & the like: shee then by all meanes must haue free egresse, and regresse, then shee must haue quiet possession without disturbance: yea, which is more, if shee doe but imagine that shee is iniured by any of her neighbours, and vpon that imagination make a complaint vnto youth her landlord, shee shall never misse of present help, so long as the landlord hath a tongue to speake in

her

her behalfe, or a hand to fight for her: all which therfore commeth to paſſe, becauſe youth thinketh nothing too good for pride, and her maintenance, but it is rather very eaſily induced to ſell whole lordſhips, to buy a wardrop of gay cloathes, that ſo at laſt it may become as wiſe as a Peacocke.

In this ſmal wiſdome, a great and extraordinary Inconſtancy doth appear; youth being altogither oppoſit to thoſe that are modeſtly attired in any vniforme colour, whereby they proue themſelues to be none of the Peacocks brood. For youth full age (being oftentimes more idle then well imployed) hath ſpare time enough to decke it ſelfe with the choiſeſt plumes, & then to accompt all them for baſe, and contemptible, who cannot ſhew as many colours

as

as it selfe, whēas if every feather (gotten by stealth from others) should be repayed to its proper owner, wee might easily perceiue whose backe woulde become most naked. But as for this suspected infamie there is no great prevention to bee vsed for it, because that vaine glorie will immediatly step in & reach forth a helping hand, to make it go for currant, still ingeminating this one only thing, that gorgeous apparrel, & al worldly iollity must take their time, which is allotted for thē, therein they must be sure to make as great brags as if they were cousin-germane to *Alexander* the great, or could draw their pedegree from *Cesar* or *Pompey*: although the one may giue a paire of taylors sheares for her recognisance; the other, a water lilly, which so often washeth

her face til at last shee be buried in the slimie mudde. Yet for al this the lillies chiefe desire is to be floting still aboue the water: the desire also of youth is to be puft vp with ambition, wherevnto she is ever subiect, so long as her chin is held vp aboue the troublesome waters of afflictiō; or if it be not, yet she is loath to loose this humor so long as she hath some hope (at the least) to cherish, and mainetaine it. For what though shee bee now depressed, must shee therefore never rise? What though shee see no possibilities to effect her purpose, must not she therfore purpose to effect what she can, so long as it is not altogither impossible to obtaine? What though fortune be now a step-mother, must shee therefore alwaies abuse her step-children? This were absurd to thinke, and there-

therefore (saith confident, and audacious youth) although I am not now what I would bee, yet I shalbe hereafter what now I am not.

The case standing thus, what need I to care for a companie of blessed fooles that haue nowe, (only for a time,) outstripped me? Yet they are not so far outgon me, that I cannot see them; at least, I can send a squint eie after them, and wish they may come back again the same way they went; & then I hope I may haue admittance to talke vvith them face to face: or (which I more hartily desire) my hope is that fortune will another while take me by the hand & lead me vp into some place of eminency where this crue shall never bee able to behold my face. If peradventure they may bee admitted into my presence, I professe

in

in expresse tearmes that I will never know them: I wilbe another kinde of person thē before? I shall haue then another heart, as prowd as *Luciferis*; another hand as nimble as *Cresus* in telling his bags; another eie not vnlike to *Iunos* eie that she cast vpon *Io*, whenas *Iupiter* had bin somewhat too bold with her; another tongue, not vnlike *Mercuries* that turneth still for his own advantage: in briefe, what soever I am, certainly I will never be companiō to those who now disdaine me: rather I will disdaine the disdainers: that done, I will begin to reflect vpō my selfe, and my owne worth, which so soone as I haue found out what it is, my next indevor shalbe to cōmunicate the same to some worthy yokfellow: yet not that neither overspeedilie, for fear least I loose al my kisses,

and

and delightfull daliance, which must vsher mee vnto her that is to become my bedfellow. One weeke I must spende in making of legs, and kissing my hand: another, at the least, must be alotted for me wherein to speak nó-sense: the third week I must absent my selfe from my sweete heart least I seeme to bee more bold the welcome; in that time also I must make me a new suit: the fourth weeke I must stay at home to see how my suit wil become me; and if there be any stitch forth of order the taylor must mende it: the fift weeke I may with credit (especially being in a new suit) goe vnto the place appointed, and there kisse my loue if she giue leaue; if not, I must craue a sixt weeke to obtaine this former denied favor: in the seaventh I must desire a conclusion for mariage: in the

eighth

eighth I must (if I can) procure it: that procured, in the ninth I am to thinke what mariage cloathes must be provided: in the tenth I must take order for my mariage dinner, in the eleaventh I must bid my guests, in the twelfth I purpose actuall mariage. In the midst of al these businesses I know I shalbe merry, if not by others procuremēt, yet (this is my comfort) that my owne hart wilbe so merrily disposed, and so delighted with loue trickes, that I cannot so much as admit of a melācholike thought, muchlesse suffer it throughly and feelingly to affect me. Rather then this shall befall mee, I will appoint my cooke the best phisitian for this maladie: he shall adde to meate sauce, and I wil provide a good stomake for both: neither hawking, nor hunting, nor the wild

goose

gooſe chaſe, nor any ſuch gentleman-like recreation ſhalbee omitted, thereby to procure a ſtomake to my meate whilſt the cooke provideth meate for my ſtomack. And if al theſe meanes prevaile not, my purſe ſhall cõmand the vintner for wine, and the apothecary for ſome preparatiue, or other, to ſtrengthen my decaied ſtomake: or if all theſe faile I will ſpẽd my whole patrimony in ſeeking for redreſſe: this firſt I promiſe & will faithfully perfourme; goodfellowes ſhall never want my cõpany: thoſe that be addicted to mirth ſhall never finde mee ſad, ſo long as I haue a penny to ſpend in their company, or a purſe to make them beleeue I haue a penny: if my mony faile I will put of my outwarde garment, which being furtheſt frõ my heart will leſſe grieue mee,

next

next I will pawne my ſhirt, and keepe my owne counſell; and if it come to this paſſe that I muſt needs part with the reſt of my cloathes, my only care ſhall bee to get me others inſteed of thē. Wherewith being cloathed, I ſhall take my ſelfe for as proper a compleat gentleman as ever I was before; and therefore if any bee ſo audaciouſly bold, as to giue me the lye, or (in any ſort) to abuſe mee, my adviſe to him is, that he warily looke to himſelfe, for otherwiſe I proteſt vnto him, vpon the word of a gentleman, that I wil ſheath my rapier in the beſt heart hee hath. What? Muſt I being a man of good ſort & faſhion (my cloths only excepted, that are ſomewhat out of faſhion) muſt I ſtoop to every baſe varlet? Muſt I ſee & winck at all iniuries offered vnto me and (like a ſoft

foole,

foole, or dull asse) make the stā-
ders by, beleeue, that what is
spoken in diriſiō of me, is meant
of some other, and think there-
by, by smooth conveyance to
swallow an iniurie? I scorne to
admit of such a base thought as
this; for (me thinkes) it argueth
too degenerous a spirit: this
pleaseth me more, to think of
revenge, and to act that which
valour shall put into my braine:
being alwaies of this setled re-
solution, that if I cannot liue
with credit, yet I will die with
honour.

Thus haue wee brought vn-
tamed youth to her vntimely
end, and that through as many
varieties of vitious humours, as
can be required to the making
of an absolute forlorne villaine:
all which humours doe there-
fore repaire to this age especial-
ly, because they know they shal

herein

herein find a body ready to entertaine these, and a thousand of the same nature.

As for old age (an age which is worthie to bee commended) wee al know that it is very dry, and therefore whosoever thinketh that there are any humors therein to be met with, he must needs bee wiser then nature, or Philosophie, for both they deny it. By which meanes it commeth to passe, that when youth full sins make attempt to get residence in this body, they are, by and by, repelled: here is no such wax that will yeeld to the impression of every seale, because it lacketh the heate of youth to temper it; here is no such clay that can be fashioned by every mould, because it wanteth that moisture which formerly it had: here is rather an inviolable constancie to keepe one,

one, and the same proportion without any mutation, or alteration at all. Wee see by experience that whitheaded old folks never change colour; and if we could as easily looke into their braines, as we see their heades, no doubt wee should see them keepe some resemblance: if wee could looke into their heartes, it is probable that they also are not far different in quality from the head, although the situation be divers. No marvell then if old age (being of so good a cōstitution) bee able also to shew her selfe no changeling, but in all her speeches, in all her actions, yea, in her very thoughts to be immutable. For it seemeth that nature hath so well provided for this age, that nothing in it may haue entrance without an especial warrant; & that nothing which is graunted by war-

warrant ſhall by any meanes (except vpon better reaſon and vncontroleable authoritie) bee revoked; which ſeldome or never is to be ſeen. Therefore whē age hath ſued forth her writ of (*quieta eſt*) ſhe beginneth forth with to be quiet indeed; admitting of no cauſeleſſe moleſtation, or offering any iniurious dealing to her neighbours. She knoweth well, & oftentimes ſeriouſly thinketh that although nature be never ſo prodigall, & free harted in renuing her tearm of life, yet nature muſt needes one day put another tenant in her roome; ſome ſon or daughter, ſome nephew, ſome adopted childe, ſome one or other muſt ſucceed; and for that reaſon ſhee ſitteth downe quietly, ſhee recalleth former times to memory, and ſeeth how ſhort and vaine they haue beene; ſhee

ſeeth

seeth the time present and imbraceth it with all willingnesse, because shee hath not many troublesome clowdy daies to overshaddow her, which daies she accounteth as nothing, because they will bee but few although protracted to the vttermost.

Vpon this deepe meditation there followeth a sequestration from earth, and earthly things; wherein because there is no true contentment to be found, therefore her chiefe study, and most earnest indeavour is, to thinke on vertue, and her excellencie, that so by this meanes, the restlesse minde may haue a true obiect, about which shee may be conversant, and wearied age may obtaine some rest. Now, and never til now, vertue appeareth in her own spotlesse integrity, and vice sheweth her

foule

foule face which hath beene in times past kept vnder a visard: both which being represented together, it is an easie matter for that exquisite iudgement wherewith old age is enriched, to know whether of these is to be chosen, whether is to bee refused, and consequently with al readinesse of will to take the good and reiect the contrary.

Suppose we now what an absolute kinde of life that must needs be, in which both iudgement, and will, in which all the faculties of the soule, and al the parts of the body, doe by a mutuall, and loving conspiracie, endeavour the prosperitie of that partie, in whom they doe thus happily concurre. It is to bee received for an infallible truth, that nothing can bee disorderly and preposterously carried where wisdome sits at the

ſtearne: it is not to be much feared that the ſhip will bee caſt away ſo long as the mariners are vigilant in their places: it is not likely that the ribs of the ſhippe will be ſpiltred ſo long as there is ſea roome enough: let the weſtern wind blow, let old age (declining now to the weſt and her laſt ſitting) ſhew her ſelfe as troubleſome as ſhe can, yet ſo long as ſhe is naturally vigilāt, ſo long as ſhe can launce forth into the depth of meditation, & comparing together of many & many a yeare, ſo long as wiſdōe is not denied vnto her, it is altogether vnprobable that ſhee ſhould be drowned: there muſt, indeed, come a time wherein death muſt challenge her own, and make old age ſtoope a little lower to kiſſe the earth, whereof ſhe her ſelfe is a portion: nevertheleſſe, age will hold vp her

head

head as high as she can: & look by how much the more her bodily part is decayed, by so much is her soule the stronger, & the better able to encounter with her worst enimies.

The worlde, peradventure, may put a faire outside vpon some base thing or other, it may draw a skin over a soare, or put tinfoyle vpon a rotten sticke; al to the end it may better delude olde age, and make her beleeue every thing but truth. If these deluding, and deceiueable policies be represented to the bodies eye, no marvell though dim sighted age apprehend thē not, but if they come once with in the sight of that eie of the vnderstāding, which old age hath more cleere then ordinary, thē they cannot passe without manifest displaying, & exposing to open view as ridiculous.

The yonger sort knowe this too well, and therefore they are very vnwilling to submit either themselues, or their actions vnto the iudgement of age, because they are conscious vnto themselues of doing amisse, and besides, they make full account to vndergoe sharppe censure if they take this course. Therefore they leaue age to her accustomed kind of living, and desire that there owne conversation may passe without reprehensiō: but when vpon mature deliberation, they well weigh with themselues what a manifest difference there is between an old and a young mans kinde of living, they are, by and by, constrained to dispraise their own, and preferre the other. For (to speak as the truth is) there is no equall comparison to bee made betweene them, if either reason

or

or experience, or any thing that carrieth with it the weight of argument may take place. Let the sacred temples, and places dedicated to divine worship be appointed the moderators to determine this controversie, & they will presently professe that they are much more beholden to old age then youth. Let the councell table, and places of eminent government speak what they haue obserued, and they likewise will say no lesse. Let all bodies incorporate make election of their governours, & the see whether age, or youth is preferred. Let all conditions & degrees of mē speak what they thinke, and no doubt but age will haue the preheminence. Vpon which ioint cōsent of all, of al sorts so mutually agreeing together in one and the same opinion, we may easily infer this.

warrantable conclusion, that in the procuring of the common good, and providing for the maintenance and credit thereof, old age may deservedly challenge the superioritie. Which if it be graunted in matters of so great consequence that concerne the weale-publike of many; how can it bee avoided but that we also graunt her the victorie in the wel ordering of her owne matters? the former of these being so much more difficult thē the latter, by how much the charge, and care of manie exceeds the provident care for one only.

Old age can do both of these; yet (as charity commands) wee must first giue her leaue to look vnto her selfe, to take order that all be well at home, before shee be thrust vpon a newe labour abroad. For oftentimes old age

is brought vnto such an exigē-cie, either through sickneſſe, or by it owne weaknes (it ſelfe be-ing nothing els but a kinde of ſicknes, & weaknes) that it can very hardly make proviſion for its owne occaſions, much leſſe for others. Wherefore in ſuch ſtraightes as theſe, wee are to grant a diſpenſation for this en-feebled age, being cōtent to ex-empt her frō ſtates matters, vpō condition that ſhe make provi-ſion for her owne wants. In ma-king of this proviſion olde age is not to learne what to do, whe ther it be in ſuch things as con-cerne the bodies ſuſtentation, or in thoſe that cōcern the qui-eted ſtate of the mind. For the body no matter what rayment it puts on, alwais provided that there be ſubſtance and warmth in it: as for outlandiſh new cuts they muſt be beholding to ſome

body elſe; here is no place for thē. The dyet likewiſe muſt hold a coreſpondencie, it cannot bee too little if it be wholſome, and well ordered. Likewiſe for ordinary, and approved recreations, they are limited within the garden wals, or the orchardes hedge, in which cōpas of groūd if a little grand-child ſhal giue attendance, and now and then ſpeake never a wiſe word; al the world cannot afford a more ſoveraign medicin for the ſtrēgthning of declining age. Al this while there is no harbour for inordinat affections, nor ambitious hunting after wildfowle, ſuch as wee may deſervedly tearme all worldly thinges; whoſe cuſtome it is to take wing, and never to look behind them, till they bee out of ſight and daunger of taking. Such fruitleſſe ſports as theſe are leſt

vnto

vnto young fooles to teach thē more wisdome: old age resteth contented with her setled (though small) estate: being alwaies of this opinion, that a little well ordered, is to bee preferred before an inordinate seeking of much; and that abundance is not the companion of contentment, but contentment is rather true abūdance. Whilst therefore old age is contented with that little which shee possesseth, and never ambitiously affecteth great matters beyond her compasse; this fruitful commoditie (at the least) is insequēt therevpon; that shee is able to manage that she hath, and never is troubled with a fruitlesse conceit of what shee can never obtaine. By which contentmēt she procureth vnto her selfe her owne quieted good, without either trouble, or iniurie offred

vnto

vnto any: except peradventure youth bee discontented to see her contented, and wish shee were worse, because her selfe is no better. This is the malice of youth, and of all those that haue not as yet seene the commodity of old age; whose custome it is (for lacke of better matter) to rayle & vilifie age as though shee were worthie to bee contemned. For say they, what beautie is there in these wrinckled withered faces? What marrow is left in their bones? What wit in their heads? What strength in their nerues? What is there in any part to be desired, or what rather is not to be scorned and neglected? As though, forsooth, nothing but venerie, nothing but quarrelling, nothing but whatsoever is abhominable, should nowe passe for currant. Proud and scornefull youth: heare

heare old age with patience, & anſwer vnto her demaunds: for ſhee asketh thee, where is thy chaſtitie? Where is thy diſcreation? Where is thy conſtancie? Where is thy humilitie? Where is thy temperance? Where is any thing whereby to commend thee? If theſe things bee conſonant to truth, and cannot be denied, then let thy chiefe indeavour bee, at all times, to ſuſpect thy owne weakneſſe; and that being throughly performed, old age will bee able to maintaine her vnſpotted credit, against all backbiters, and evill ſurmyſers whatſoever.

FINIS.